

University of Montana  
**ScholarWorks at University of Montana**

---

Mike Mansfield Speeches

Mike Mansfield Papers

---

1962

# Speeches, Remarks to the Democratic Conference

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.umt.edu/mansfield\\_speeches](https://scholarworks.umt.edu/mansfield_speeches)

---

## Recommended Citation

Mansfield, Mike 1903-2001, "Speeches, Remarks to the Democratic Conference" (1962). *Mike Mansfield Speeches*. 1383.  
[https://scholarworks.umt.edu/mansfield\\_speeches/1383](https://scholarworks.umt.edu/mansfield_speeches/1383)

This Speech is brought to you for free and open access by the Mike Mansfield Papers at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Mike Mansfield Speeches by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@mso.umt.edu](mailto:scholarworks@mso.umt.edu).

Remarks of  
Senator Mike Mansfield  
(D. Montana)

REMARKS TO THE DEMOCRATIC CONFERENCE  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 1962

Today marks the beginning of the Second Session of the 87th Congress. On January 20th, the 35th President will begin his second year in the White House. Those figures -- 35 Presidents, 87 Congresses -- give one a sense of the continuity and the stability of our form of government.

The past year has witnessed another aspect of American democracy: its vigor. It was a year of achievement, marked by the President's increasing popular support and evident command of his office; marked also by the effective and responsible cooperation of this body.

To Democrats in Congress, the President's strength in the country -- the confidence people have in his ability to lead us in the very tumultuous world we inhabit -- is an asset of incalculable value.

It means that the climate for progressive legislation is good. It means that the country can face its problems with greater unity. And it means that Democrats will enter the 1962 elections supported by a public servant whose leadership is firmly approved by the electorate.

I think this conference of Democratic Senators can take a few bows itself, when we talk about public support. The two recent Gallup Polls make good reading: one of them showed 79% of the people approving the way the President is handling his job; the other showed that 78% of the people believe the Democratic Party is best able to handle the problems they consider of paramount importance. I don't believe either one of these figures would have been nearly so high if the men in this room had performed less responsibly last year. In the check-and-balance system we serve under, the thoughtful cooperation of the Congress is essential for good government, and the public knows it. You provided it.

I do not think we should be troubled by the President's figure of 79% support, while the Party at large drew only 78%.

The difference is Caroline, and there's nothing we can do about it.

Let me take a few moments to go over some of the achievements of the last session in the domestic field. They include several laws of considerable importance to the country's present and future, and it is worth recalling what those are:

The area redevelopment program was established for economically distressed areas.

The minimum wage was increased to \$1.25 per hour, and more than 3 1/2 million workers were brought under wage and hour protection for the first time.

The social security program was liberalized, benefits to widows increased, and men permitted reduced benefits on retirement at 62.

A far-reaching housing act was adopted, providing, for the first time, long-term, low-interest housing for middle-income families.

Assistance was provided for the dependent children of needy unemployed parents.

A highly successful feed grains program was enacted.

The highway and airport acts were extended and improved.

A realistic water pollution control program--that is, one that can begin to meet community needs--was adopted.

The Senate passed a manpower retraining program which will help those men threatened with the loss of their jobs to machines to develop new skills.

A mass transportation program was put under way.

In the field of natural resources, the Senate passed major legislation affecting wilderness and shoreline areas; created a great



oceanographic research program; and stepped up the Government's work in saline water conversion.

Five major agency reorganization plans went into effect.

Federal criminal law was strengthened, particularly in the anti-gambling area.

The Senate adopted a large-scale aid to education program, the debate on which will serve to instruct many Congresses to come.

That is a partial account of the work you did in the domestic area.

In defense and foreign policy matters, the record was equally outstanding. Congress approved of the principle of long-term commitments

to the mutual security program; appropriated \$600 million for aid to

Latin America; created the Disarmament Agency and the Peace Corps;

approved the creation of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and

Development; and, because it accepted the philosophy of Winston Churchill

and John F. Kennedy -- that -- we should "arm to parley" -- Congress gave the President what he asked for in military weapons and personnel.

Speaking of defense, I want to say a word about our military preparedness as we enter 1962. I expect most of you have been impressed, as I have, with the competence and drive of the defense establishment during the past year. It has clearly become, in the words of the Secretary of Defense, a more effective instrument of our foreign policy. In his report to the people last week, Secretary McNamara listed a number of accomplishments during 1961.

There has been a 50% increase in the portion of our strategic bombing force on 15-minute alert.

The size of the Polaris submarine force to be available by the end of 1964 has been increased by 50%.

There has been a 100% increase in our capacity to produce Minuteman missiles.

There have been substantial increases in the number of

ready combat units and anti-guerrilla forces, and in our airlift and sea-lift capacity to move these forces where they are needed.

Gains have been made in organization: in creating a Defense Intelligence Agency, a Defense Supply Agency, in planning and budgetary controls, and in the creation of a Strike Command combining the strategic Army and the tactical Air Force.

The events of 1961 proved again how important our defense preparedness is to the security of the world. We suffered setbacks and frustrations in the world last year; Berlin and Southeast Asia gave us many anxious days, and will continue to do so; and yet I believe the efforts made to strengthen our military forces during the year-- including the sacrifices made by the reserve and National Guard units called up in the Autumn--resulted in a world picture on New Year's Day somewhat brighter than we expected it to be last Summer.

In these times it is a commonplace to say that much work lies ahead to make free institutions safer and free people more



prosperous. Nevertheless it is true; we turn from a heavy calendar of work in 1961 to an equally heavy one in the session ahead. We have profoundly important decisions to make in the field of international trade. We face great questions of tax policy, medical assistance to the aged, higher education -- to suggest only a few of those matters on the horizon at this moment. We must expect other questions of urgency during the session, as critical as those we know about now.

In the resolution of these matters, I remind you again that I am your servant -- as nearly as I can be, your advocate in discussions at the White House, and your representative in scheduling the business of the Senate. I learned a good deal about the Senate last year, and I expect to learn a good deal more this year -- and indeed I should, because I am instructed in the subject by an incomparable faculty. I may add that, so far as I have anything to say about it, classes will usually end in time for dinner.

Before I close I want to say a word about our relations with the President. If my opinion of him is not already clear, I will spell it out: He has the capacity to be one of our greatest chief executives. I believe he will offer us this year, as he did in 1961, a sound program for America. I expect to be one of the most consistent supporters of that program in the Congress. I hope he will find the great majority of his Party behind him when it counts. But I say again, as I did in our initial meeting last year, that the President is no admirer of monolithic thinking. He was too long a Member of Congress to believe that all wisdom resides in the Executive Branch. The best service we can render the President, and the country at large, is to speak our minds after mature reflection, and to make such laws as our conscience and reason demand.

No one in this room, and certainly no one in the White House, conceives that the world's gravest problems will be settled by the fiat

of the President, or the bills and resolutions of the Congress.

There are those who believe the President should propose a recipe for instant Utopia, and that Congress should then be challenged to cook it. In my opinion that recipe has not been found, and the President will be suspicious of anything put up as qualifying for it. He knows that advances in human affairs are made painstakingly, by the cooperation and hard work of men of good will. I believe he will receive both from the Senate this year.

# # # # #